

participate in the argument before the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), which led to the end of legal segregation in our nation's public schools. *Brown* included a Delaware case Redding had won in the State Chancery Court holding that nine black children had the right to attend white public schools.

Louis L. Redding died Monday, September 28, 1998, at the age of 96. His death is obviously a time of sadness, but also a time to celebrate his truly pioneering life and spirit.

Time and time again, Redding not only overcame adversity—he excelled in the face of it. He pursued justice persistently and passionately—standing up for equal rights in education, public accommodations and criminal law.

Redding, a 1928 Harvard University Law School graduate, broke the color barrier in the Delaware Bar after 253 years of this all-Caucasian group. When he took the Delaware Bar Examination with eight other white law school graduates, he was given a different, harder test. He passed with the top grades. After he was admitted to the Delaware Bar in 1929, he remained the only minority attorney in Delaware for another twenty-seven years.

It even took twenty years for the Delaware State Bar Association to allow him to become a member—and again he excelled in the face of adversity—becoming Vice President of this once all-white Association.

Redding earned national respect with a series of sweeping civil rights victories in the Delaware courts. In 1950, he successfully argued *Parker v. University of Delaware*, Del. Ch., 75 A.2d 225 (1950), which held that the University of Delaware's refusal to admit blacks was unconstitutional because the State's black institution, Delaware State College, was woefully inferior.

He next filed the public school racial segregation case, *Belton v. Gebhardt*, Del. Ch., 87 A.2d 862 (1952), aff'd, Del. Supr., 91 A.2d 137 (1952). This was the only case ultimately affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown*. Most Americans associate the name of Redding's distinguished fellow NAACP attorney, Thurgood Marshall, with this school desegregation case, since he achieved greatness as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. And that's just how Redding preferred it. He preferred a lower profile, using his great skills to get the job done.

After the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Redding dedicated his practice to implementing the desegregation order. In 1956, he filed a class action suit in the federal District Court in Delaware seeking to compel a school district to establish a desegregation plan. It took another twenty years for a court order forcing the implementation of this plan. Again, Redding persistently plodded along in the pursuit of justice.

Redding also set precedent in ending discrimination in public accommoda-

tions. In 1961, he won another U.S. Supreme Court case, representing former Wilmington City Councilman William "Dutch" Burton, allowing blacks to eat at the same counter with whites at the Eagle Coffee Shoppe owned by the Wilmington Parking Authority.

It is worth noting that Redding did not consider the U.S. Supreme Court victories to be his greatest legal achievements. Instead, he said his most significant accomplishment was desegregating Delaware's courtrooms. In an interview in 1990, Redding said:

I suppose that really what I am most proud of . . . is my undertaking years back to break up segregation in seating in the courtrooms (of Delaware) . . . It was pretty horrible to go into a courtroom and see blacks seated in one place and whites in another. That's the way I found it when I came in.

Ironically, Redding was not particularly proud of his distinction as the first African-American attorney in Delaware. In a characteristically blunt, honest statement, Redding once said, "How can you boast about being the first when you realize it was the result of racism and antipathy?"

And Redding downplayed his role as a civil rights and civil liberties pioneer. In a 1974 speech at Notre Dame University, he said: "I am just a pedestrian, journeyman lawyer who happens to have been practicing in a state where the necessities of the situation made me participate in civil rights activities."

The trails Redding blazed, however, set the course for those of us who are humbled to follow in his footsteps.

On a very personal note, Louis Redding was one of my heroes. His leadership in the civil rights movement got me interested in politics. I first met him in 1969 when I was working as a young, public defender representing many in the black community in civil and criminal cases.

And make no mistake about it—he commanded respect in the community and in the courtroom. In the black community, he respectfully was known as "Lawyer Redding." Of course to me, it was never "Lou," I always said "Mr. Redding, Sir." Indeed, he was quite a presence in the courtroom, with his tailored, conservative suits and button-down shirts. His standard was excellence, as he fought for the poorest and most discriminated among us.

Fortunately for us, Louis Redding's legacy and spirit live on in our community, and in his three daughters and five grandchildren. His name also appropriately graces a middle school and the New Castle County/City of Wilmington public building. His bronze statue stands erect surrounded by young children in the public square as well.

Louis L. Redding, noted civil rights attorney, teacher, loyal son, father, and grandfather—we will miss you greatly, and vow to keep your legacy alive.●

MEREDITH BIXBY DONATION

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Meredith Bixby of Saline, Michigan. Mr. Bixby is the father of the Meredith Marionettes Touring Company and is donating his collection of marionette puppets to the Saline Culture and Commerce Center for permanent exhibit.

For more than forty years, Mr. Bixby toured with his Meredith Marionettes Touring Company across the Midwest and South staging shows in schools, theaters, and community centers. Each year nearly a quarter of a million children enjoyed the marionette magic Mr. Bixby brought to them.

Mr. Bixby has been a leader in puppeteering for nearly five decades. He is affectionately known as the "Master of the Marionettes" and built his own marionettes and produced many original shows. He is also one of the original founding members of The Puppeteers of America, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year.

This permanent exhibit is a cooperative effort of the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, the City of Saline, the Bixby Project Group, and Saline Area Chamber of Commerce. This exhibit will preserve the memory of Meredith Bixby's work and educate new generations of children of the art and entertainment of marionettes.

I once again congratulate Meredith Bixby for his years of providing quality entertainment and the gracious donation of his collection to the community of Saline.●

ROBERT F. DEASY

● Mr. DODD. Mr. President, communities are not defined by physical borders. They are defined by people—people who are concerned for the well-being of their neighbors, even if they do not know them. People who want to make their town a good place to raise children. People who recognize the importance of being a part of something larger than themselves. Today, I want to speak about one such person who has worked tirelessly to make Rocky Hill, Connecticut a true community: Robert Deasy.

Bob Deasy worked for more than forty years as an accountant with Travelers and Phoenix Fire Insurance before retiring more than twenty years ago. Throughout his life, Bob has been remarkably active in the Rocky Hill community.

From 1973 to 1985, he served as Rocky Hill's registrar of voters, where he worked closely with the Secretary of State's office. He has also been a member of American Legion Post 123 in Rocky Hill for more than 30 years, and he served for eight years as the Post's commander. Through the American Legion, he reached out to young people in the area by coordinating their Boys State and Girls State activities, which provide young people with an opportunity to see how their government